Package 'asa'

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Title AI Search Agent for Large-Scale Research Automation

Version 0.1.0

Description Provides an LLM-powered research agent for performing AI search tasks at large scales. Uses a ReAct (Reasoning + Acting) agent pattern with web search capabilities via DuckDuckGo and Wikipedia. Implements DeepAgent-style memory folding for context management. The agent is built on 'LangGraph' and supports multiple LLM backends including 'OpenAI', 'Groq', and 'xAI'.

URL https://github.com/cjerzak/asa-software

BugReports https://github.com/cjerzak/asa-software/issues

Depends R (>= 4.0.0)

License GPL-3

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SystemRequirements Python (>= 3.11), Conda, Tor (optional, for anonymous searching)

NeedsCompilation no

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Contents

asa-package *asa: AI Search Agent for Large-Scale Research Automation*

Description

The asa package provides an LLM-powered research agent for performing AI search tasks at large scales using web search capabilities.

The agent uses a ReAct (Reasoning + Acting) pattern implemented via LangGraph, with tools for searching DuckDuckGo and Wikipedia. It supports multiple LLM backends (OpenAI, Groq, xAI) and implements DeepAgent-style memory folding for managing long conversations.

Main Functions

- `build_backend`: Set up the Python conda environment
- `initialize_agent`: Initialize the search agent
- `run_agent`: Run the agent with a custom prompt
- `run_task`: Run a structured task with the agent
- `run_task_batch`: Run multiple tasks in batch

Configuration

The package requires a Python environment with LangChain and related packages. Use `build_backend` to create this environment automatically.

For anonymous searching, the package can use Tor as a SOCKS5 proxy. Install Tor via `brew install tor` (macOS) and start it with `brew services start tor`.

Author(s)

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See Also

Useful links:

- https://github.com/cjerzak/asa-software
- Report bugs at https://github.com/cjerzak/asa-software/issues

.build_trace *Build Trace from Raw Response*

Description

Build Trace from Raw Response

Usage

```
.build_trace(raw_response)
```

.create_agent *Create the LangGraph Agent*

Description

Create the LangGraph Agent

Usage

```
.create_agent(
  llm,
  tools,
  use_memory_folding,
  memory_threshold,
  memory_keep_recent
)
```

Arguments

`llm`	LLM instance
`tools`	List of tools
`use_memory_folding`	Whether to use memory folding
`memory_threshold`	Messages before folding
`memory_keep_recent`	Messages to keep

.create_http_clients *Create HTTP Clients for API Calls*

Description

Create HTTP Clients for API Calls

Usage

```
.create_http_clients(proxy, timeout)
```

Arguments

`proxy`	Proxy URL or NULL
`timeout`	Timeout in seconds

.create_llm *Create LLM Instance*

Description

Create LLM Instance

Usage

```
.create_llm(backend, model, clients, rate_limit)
```

Arguments

backend	Backend name
model	Model identifier
clients	HTTP clients (for OpenAI)
rate_limit	Requests per second

.create_tools *Create Search Tools*

Description

Create Search Tools

Usage

```
.create_tools(proxy)
```

Arguments

proxy	Proxy URL or NULL

.extract_fields *Extract Specific Fields from Response*

Description

Extract Specific Fields from Response

Usage

```
.extract_fields(text, fields)
```

Arguments

text	Response text
fields	Character vector of field names to extract

.extract_json_from_trace *Extract JSON from Agent Traces*

Description

Internal function to extract JSON data from raw agent traces.

Usage

```
.extract_json_from_trace(text)
```

Arguments

text	Raw trace text

Value

Parsed JSON data as a list, or NULL if no JSON found

.extract_json_object *Extract JSON Object from Text*

Description

Extract JSON Object from Text

Usage

```
.extract_json_object(text)
```

Arguments

text	Response text

.extract_response_text *Extract Response Text from Raw Response*

Description

Extract Response Text from Raw Response

Usage

```
.extract_response_text(raw_response, backend)
```

.get_extdata_path *Get External Data Path*

Description

Returns the path to the package's external data directory.

Usage

```
.get_extdata_path(filename = NULL)
```

Arguments

filename	Optional filename within extdata directory

Value

Character string with the path

.get_python_path *Get Package Python Module Path*

Description

Returns the path to the Python modules shipped with the package.

Usage

```
.get_python_path()
```

Value

Character string with the path to inst/python

.handle_response_issues *Handle Response Issues (Rate Limiting, Timeouts)*

Description

Handle Response Issues (Rate Limiting, Timeouts)

Usage

```
.handle_response_issues(trace, verbose)
```

`.import_python_packages` *Import Required Python Packages*

Description

Import Required Python Packages

Usage

```
.import_python_packages()
```

`.invoke_memory_folding_agent` *Invoke Memory Folding Agent*

Description

Invoke Memory Folding Agent

Usage

```
.invoke_memory_folding_agent(python_agent, prompt, recursion_limit)
```

`.invoke_standard_agent` *Invoke Standard Agent*

Description

Invoke Standard Agent

Usage

```
.invoke_standard_agent(python_agent, prompt, recursion_limit)
```

`.is_initialized` *Check if ASA Agent is Initialized*

Description

Check if ASA Agent is Initialized

Usage

```
.is_initialized()
```

Value

Logical indicating if the agent has been initialized

.parse_json_response *Parse JSON Response*

Description

Parse JSON Response

Usage

```
.parse_json_response(response_text)
```

Arguments

response_text	Response text from agent

as.data.frame.asa_result *Convert asa_result to Data Frame*

Description

Convert asa_result to Data Frame

Usage

```
## S3 method for class 'asa_result'
as.data.frame(x, ...)
```

Arguments

x	An asa_result object
...	Additional arguments (ignored)

Value

A single-row data frame

asa_agent *Constructor for asa_agent Objects*

Description

Creates an S3 object representing an initialized ASA search agent.

Usage

```
asa_agent(python_agent, backend, model, config)
```

Arguments

python_agent	The underlying Python agent object
backend	LLM backend name (e.g., "openai", "groq")
model	Model identifier
config	Agent configuration list

Value

An object of class asa_agent

asa_response *Constructor for asa_response Objects*

Description

Creates an S3 object representing an agent response.

Usage

```
asa_response(
  message,
  status_code,
  raw_response,
  trace,
  elapsed_time,
  fold_count,
  prompt
)
```

Arguments

message	The final response text
status_code	Status code (200 = success, 100 = error)
raw_response	The full Python response object
trace	Full text trace of agent execution
elapsed_time	Execution time in minutes
fold_count	Number of memory folds performed
prompt	The original prompt

Value

An object of class `asa_response`

`asa_result` *Constructor for asa_result Objects*

Description

Creates an S3 object representing the result of a research task.

Usage

```
asa_result(prompt, message, parsed, raw_output, elapsed_time, status)
```

Arguments

`prompt`	The original prompt
`message`	The agent's response text
`parsed`	Parsed output (list or NULL)
`raw_output`	Full agent trace
`elapsed_time`	Execution time in minutes
`status`	Status ("success" or "error")

Value

An object of class `asa_result`

`build_backend` *Build the Python Backend Environment*

Description

Creates a conda environment with all required Python dependencies for the asa search agent, including LangChain, LangGraph, and search tools.

Usage

```
build_backend(conda_env = "asa_env", conda = "auto", python_version = "3.13")
```

Arguments

`conda_env`	Name of the conda environment (default: "asa_env")
`conda`	Path to conda executable (default: "auto")
`python_version`	Python version to use (default: "3.13")

Details

This function creates a new conda environment and installs the following Python packages:

- langchain_groq, langchain_community, langchain_openai
- langgraph
- ddgs (DuckDuckGo search)
- selenium, primp (browser automation)
- beautifulsoup4, requests
- fake_headers, httpx
- pysocks, socksio (proxy support)

Value

Invisibly returns NULL; called for side effects.

Examples

```
## Not run:
# Create the default environment
build_backend()

# Create with a custom name
build_backend(conda_env = "my_asa_env")

## End(Not run)
```

---

build_prompt *Build a Task Prompt from Template*

Description

Creates a formatted prompt by substituting variables into a template.

Usage

```
build_prompt(template, ...)
```

Arguments

template	A character string with placeholders in the form {variable_name}
...	Named arguments to substitute into the template

Value

A formatted prompt string

Examples

```
## Not run:
prompt <- build_prompt(
  template = "Find information about {{name}} in {{country}} during {{year}}",
  name = "Marie Curie",
  country = "France",
  year = 1903
)

## End(Not run)
```

---

check_backend *Check Python Environment Availability*

Description

Checks if the required Python environment and packages are available.

Usage

```
check_backend(conda_env = "asa_env")
```

Arguments

conda_env	Name of the conda environment to check

Value

A list with components:

- available: Logical, TRUE if environment is ready
- conda_env: Name of the environment checked
- python_version: Python version if available
- missing_packages: Character vector of missing packages (if any)

Examples

```
## Not run:
status <- check_backend()
if (!status$available) {
  build_backend()
}

## End(Not run)
```

clean_whitespace *Clean Whitespace*

Description

Normalizes whitespace in a string by collapsing multiple spaces and trimming leading/trailing whitespace.

Usage

```
clean_whitespace(x)
```

Arguments

x	Character string

Value

Cleaned string

decode_html *Decode HTML Entities*

Description

Converts HTML entities to their character equivalents.

Usage

```
decode_html(x)
```

Arguments

x	Character string with HTML entities

Value

Decoded string

extract_agent_results *Extract Structured Data from Agent Traces*

Description

Parses raw agent output to extract search snippets, Wikipedia content, URLs, and JSON data. This is the main function for post-processing agent traces.

Usage

```
extract_agent_results(raw_output)
```

Arguments

raw_output	Raw output string from agent invocation (the trace field from an asa_response object)

Value

A list with components:

- search_snippets: Character vector of search result content
- search_urls: Character vector of URLs from search results
- wikipedia_snippets: Character vector of Wikipedia content
- json_data: Extracted JSON data as a list (if present)

Examples

```
## Not run:
response <- run_agent("Who is the president of France?", agent)
extracted <- extract_agent_results(response$trace)
print(extracted$search_snippets)

## End(Not run)
```

extract_search_snippets *Extract Search Snippets by Source Number*

Description

Extracts content from Search tool messages in the agent trace.

Usage

```
extract_search_snippets(text)
```

Arguments

text	Raw agent trace text

Value

Character vector of search snippets, ordered by source number

Examples

```
## Not run:
snippets <- extract_search_snippets(response$trace)

## End(Not run)
```

`extract_urls` *Extract URLs by Source Number*

Description

Extracts URLs from Search tool messages in the agent trace.

Usage

```
extract_urls(text)
```

Arguments

`text`	Raw agent trace text

Value

Character vector of URLs, ordered by source number

Examples

```
## Not run:
urls <- extract_urls(response$trace)

## End(Not run)
```

`extract_wikipedia_content`
Extract Wikipedia Content

Description

Extracts content from Wikipedia tool messages in the agent trace.

Usage

```
extract_wikipedia_content(text)
```

Arguments

text	Raw agent trace text

Value

Character vector of Wikipedia snippets

Examples

```
## Not run:
wiki <- extract_wikipedia_content(response$trace)

## End(Not run)
```

---

format_duration *Format Time Duration*

Description

Formats a numeric duration (in minutes) as a human-readable string.

Usage

```
format_duration(minutes)
```

Arguments

minutes	Numeric duration in minutes

Value

Formatted string

---

get_agent *Get the Current Agent*

Description

Returns the currently initialized agent, or NULL if not initialized.

Usage

```
get_agent()
```

Value

An asa_agent object or NULL

Examples

```
## Not run:
agent <- get_agent()
if (is.null(agent)) {
  agent <- initialize_agent()
}

## End(Not run)
```

---

get_tor_ip *Get External IP via Tor*

Description

Retrieves the external IP address as seen through Tor proxy.

Usage

```
get_tor_ip(proxy = "socks5h://127.0.0.1:9050")
```

Arguments

proxy	Tor proxy URL

Value

IP address string or NA on failure

Examples

```
## Not run:
ip <- get_tor_ip()
message("Current Tor IP: ", ip)

## End(Not run)
```

---

initialize_agent *Initialize the ASA Search Agent*

Description

Initializes the Python environment and creates the LangGraph agent with search tools (Wikipedia, DuckDuckGo). The agent can use multiple LLM backends and supports DeepAgent-style memory folding.

Usage

```
initialize_agent(
  backend = "openai",
  model = "gpt-4.1-mini",
  conda_env = "asa_env",
  proxy = "socks5h://127.0.0.1:9050",
  use_memory_folding = TRUE,
  memory_threshold = 4L,
  memory_keep_recent = 2L,
  rate_limit = 0.2,
  timeout = 120L,
  verbose = TRUE
)
```

Arguments

backend	LLM backend to use. One of: "openai", "groq", "xai", "exo"
model	Model identifier (e.g., "gpt-4.1-mini", "llama-3.3-70b-versatile")
conda_env	Name of the conda environment with Python dependencies
proxy	SOCKS5 proxy URL for Tor (default: "socks5h://127.0.0.1:9050"). Set to NULL to disable proxy.
use_memory_folding	Enable DeepAgent-style memory compression (default: TRUE)
memory_threshold	Number of messages before folding triggers (default: 4)
memory_keep_recent	Number of recent messages to preserve after folding (default: 2)
rate_limit	Requests per second for rate limiting (default: 0.2)
timeout	Request timeout in seconds (default: 120)
verbose	Print status messages (default: TRUE)

Details

The agent is created with two tools:

- Wikipedia: For looking up encyclopedic information
- DuckDuckGo Search: For web searches with a 4-tier fallback system (PRIMP -> Selenium -> DDGS library -> raw requests)

Memory folding (enabled by default) compresses older messages into a summary to manage context length in long conversations, following the DeepAgent paper.

Value

An object of class `asa_agent` containing the initialized agent and configuration.

API Keys

The following environment variables should be set based on your backend:

- OpenAI: `OPENAI_API_KEY`
- Groq: `GROQ_API_KEY`
- xAI: `XAI_API_KEY`

See Also

run_agent, run_task

Examples

```
## Not run:
# Initialize with OpenAI
agent <- initialize_agent(
  backend = "openai",
  model = "gpt-4.1-mini"
)

# Initialize with Groq and custom settings
agent <- initialize_agent(
  backend = "groq",
  model = "llama-3.3-70b-versatile",
  use_memory_folding = FALSE,
  proxy = NULL  # No Tor proxy
)

## End(Not run)
```

---

is_tor_running *Check if Tor is Running*

Description

Checks if Tor is running and accessible on the default port.

Usage

```
is_tor_running(port = 9050L)
```

Arguments

port	Port number (default: 9050)

Value

Logical indicating if Tor appears to be running

Examples

```
## Not run:
if (!is_tor_running()) {
  message("Start Tor with: brew services start tor")
}

## End(Not run)
```

json_escape *Clean Text for JSON Output*

Description

Escapes special characters in text for safe inclusion in JSON strings.

Usage

```
json_escape(x)
```

Arguments

x	Character string to escape

Value

Escaped string

print.asa_agent *Print Method for asa_agent Objects*

Description

Print Method for asa_agent Objects

Usage

```
## S3 method for class 'asa_agent'
print(x, ...)
```

Arguments

x	An asa_agent object
...	Additional arguments (ignored)

Value

Invisibly returns the object

print.asa_response *Print Method for asa_response Objects*

Description

Print Method for asa_response Objects

Usage

```
## S3 method for class 'asa_response'
print(x, ...)
```

Arguments

x	An asa_response object
...	Additional arguments (ignored)

Value

Invisibly returns the object

print.asa_result *Print Method for asa_result Objects*

Description

Print Method for asa_result Objects

Usage

```
## S3 method for class 'asa_result'
print(x, ...)
```

Arguments

x	An asa_result object
...	Additional arguments (ignored)

Value

Invisibly returns the object

print2 *Print Utility*

Description

Wrapper around cat for consistent output formatting.

Usage

```
print2(...)
```

Arguments

...	Arguments passed to cat

process_outputs *Process Multiple Agent Outputs*

Description

Processes a data frame of raw agent outputs, extracting structured data.

Usage

```
process_outputs(df, parallel = FALSE, workers = 10L)
```

Arguments

df	Data frame with a 'raw_output' column containing agent traces
parallel	Use parallel processing
workers	Number of workers

Value

The input data frame with additional extracted columns: search_count, wiki_count, and any JSON fields found

reset_agent *Reset the Agent*

Description

Clears the initialized agent state, forcing reinitialization on next use.

Usage

```
reset_agent()
```

Value

Invisibly returns NULL

rotate_tor_circuit *Rotate Tor Circuit*

Description

Requests a new Tor circuit by restarting the Tor service.

Usage

```
rotate_tor_circuit(method = c("brew", "systemctl", "signal"), wait = 12L)
```

Arguments

method	Method to restart: "brew" (macOS), "systemctl" (Linux), or "signal"
wait	Seconds to wait for new circuit (default: 12)

Value

Invisibly returns NULL

Examples

```
## Not run:
rotate_tor_circuit()

## End(Not run)
```

run_agent *Run the ASA Agent with a Custom Prompt*

Description

Invokes the search agent with an arbitrary prompt, returning the full agent trace and response. This is the low-level function for running the agent; for structured task execution, use run_task.

Usage

```
run_agent(prompt, agent = NULL, recursion_limit = NULL, verbose = FALSE)
```

Arguments

prompt	The prompt to send to the agent
agent	An asa_agent object from initialize_agent, or NULL to use/create the default agent
recursion_limit	Maximum number of agent steps (default: 100 for memory folding, 20 otherwise)
verbose	Print status messages (default: FALSE)

Value

An object of class `asa_response` containing:

- message: The final response text
- status_code: 200 for success, 100 for error
- raw_response: The full Python response object
- trace: Full text trace of agent execution
- elapsed_time: Execution time in minutes
- fold_count: Number of memory folds (if memory folding enabled)

See Also

`initialize_agent`, `run_task`

Examples

```
## Not run:
# Run with a custom prompt
agent <- initialize_agent()
result <- run_agent(
  prompt = "Who was the 44th president of the United States?",
  agent = agent
)
print(result$message)

## End(Not run)
```

---

run_agent_batch *Run Agent in Batch Mode*

Description

Runs the agent on multiple prompts, optionally in parallel.

Usage

```
run_agent_batch(
  prompts,
  agent = NULL,
  parallel = FALSE,
  workers = 4L,
  progress = TRUE
)
```

Arguments

`prompts`	Character vector of prompts
`agent`	An asa_agent object
`parallel`	Use parallel processing (requires future.apply package)
`workers`	Number of parallel workers (default: 4)
`progress`	Show progress bar (default: TRUE)

Value

A list of asa_response objects

Examples

```
## Not run:
prompts <- c(
  "What is the population of Tokyo?",
  "What is the population of New York?"
)
results <- run_agent_batch(prompts, agent)

## End(Not run)
```

`run_task` *Run a Structured Task with the Agent*

Description

Executes a research task using the AI search agent with a structured prompt and returns parsed results.

Usage

```
run_task(prompt, output_format = "text", agent = NULL, verbose = FALSE)
```

Arguments

`prompt`	The task prompt or question for the agent to research
`output_format`	Expected output format. One of: "text" (raw response), "json" (parse as JSON), or a character vector of field names to extract
`agent`	An asa_agent object from `initialize_agent`, or NULL to use the currently initialized agent
`verbose`	Print progress messages (default: FALSE)

Details

This function provides a high-level interface for running research tasks. For simple text responses, use `output_format = "text"`. For structured outputs, use `output_format = "json"` or specify field names to extract.

Value

An object of class `asa_result` with components:

- prompt: The original prompt
- message: The agent's response text
- parsed: Parsed output (if output_format specified)
- raw_output: Full agent trace
- elapsed_time: Execution time in minutes
- status: "success" or "error"

See Also

initialize_agent, run_agent, run_task_batch

Examples

```
## Not run:
# Initialize agent first
agent <- initialize_agent(backend = "openai", model = "gpt-4.1-mini")

# Simple text query
result <- run_task(
  prompt = "What is the capital of France?",
  output_format = "text",
  agent = agent
)
print(result$message)

# JSON structured output
result <- run_task(
  prompt = "Find information about Albert Einstein and return JSON with
            fields: birth_year, death_year, nationality, field_of_study",
  output_format = "json",
  agent = agent
)
print(result$parsed)

## End(Not run)
```

---

run_task_batch *Run Multiple Tasks in Batch*

Description

Executes multiple research tasks, optionally in parallel.

Usage

```
run_task_batch(
  prompts,
  output_format = "text",
  agent = NULL,
  parallel = FALSE,
  workers = 4L,
  progress = TRUE
)
```

Arguments

prompts	Character vector of task prompts, or a data frame with a 'prompt' column
output_format	Expected output format (applies to all tasks)
agent	An asa_agent object

parallel	Use parallel processing
workers	Number of parallel workers
progress	Show progress messages

Value

A list of asa_result objects, or if prompts was a data frame, the data frame with result columns added

Examples

```
## Not run:
prompts <- c(
  "What is the population of Tokyo?",
  "What is the population of New York?",
  "What is the population of London?"
)
results <- run_task_batch(prompts, agent = agent)

## End(Not run)
```

---

safe_json_parse *Safe JSON Parse*

Description

Attempts to parse JSON, returning NULL on failure.

Usage

```
safe_json_parse(x)
```

Arguments

x	JSON string

Value

Parsed R object or NULL

summary.asa_agent *Summary Method for asa_agent Objects*

Description

Summary Method for asa_agent Objects

Usage

```
## S3 method for class 'asa_agent'
summary(object, ...)
```

Arguments

object	An asa_agent object
...	Additional arguments (ignored)

Value

Invisibly returns a summary list

summary.asa_response *Summary Method for asa_response Objects*

Description

Summary Method for asa_response Objects

Usage

```
## S3 method for class 'asa_response'
summary(object, show_trace = FALSE, ...)
```

Arguments

object	An asa_response object
show_trace	Include full trace in output
...	Additional arguments (ignored)

Value

Invisibly returns a summary list

summary.asa_result *Summary Method for asa_result Objects*

Description

Summary Method for asa_result Objects

Usage

```
## S3 method for class 'asa_result'
summary(object, ...)
```

Arguments

object	An asa_result object
...	Additional arguments (ignored)

Value

Invisibly returns a summary list

truncate_string *Truncate String*

Description

Truncates a string to a maximum length, adding ellipsis if truncated.

Usage

```
truncate_string(x, max_length = 100, ellipsis = "...")
```

Arguments

x	Character string
max_length	Maximum length
ellipsis	String to append when truncated

Value

Truncated string

`%||%` *Null-Coalescing Operator*

Description

Returns the left-hand side if it is not NULL, otherwise returns the right-hand side.

Usage

```
x %||% y
```

Arguments

x	Left-hand side value
y	Right-hand side value (default)

Value

x if not NULL, otherwise y

Index